

Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force

Small Group Activity - Group #3: New Option (Consulting with groups outside of the Task Force that are already working on safety and counseling issues)

Breakout Group Notes

Date: Tuesday, February 28

Group members: Jennie Niles, Kemba Hendrix, Karen Williams, Caryn Ernst, Emily Lawson, Mary Levy, Shanita Burney, Mayor Anthony Williams

DME staff members: Rebecca Lee, Hannah Holliday

- The group should take advantage of this timeline and the expertise on the Task Force and outside of the Task Force.
- What are we going to charge that group to help with? What's the frame to give them?
- What have been happening with existing efforts?
 - (Deputy Mayor Niles) The Transportation Working Group (TWG) started because of the boundary changes. The group looked to see if there were glaring areas or opportunities that DDOT and others were missing. A subgroup around safety arose as part of the TWG because there was the most interest in that. It was broadly trying to figure out how to get kids safely to and from school.
 - Schools are often isolated; some are not connected to other schools in the same neighborhood. Schools do not communicate horizontally about safe passage issues. The issue is that schools cannot quickly learn about safety issues (for example, if something happens at a metro stop).
 - The Safety Working Group also looked into community wide safe-passage efforts. Richard Wright sponsors one involving lots of volunteers and coordinated community support. The Safety Working Group could set up pilot safe passage programs that are place-based.
- The Safety Working Group hasn't even gotten to SRO (School Resource Officer) MOU
- There was also a group focused on getting folks to be thought-partners about what needed to happen to bolster support for safety initiatives. It started doing some community mapping and sharing resources.
- That group sounds like it was tactical. The kind of group the Task Force would work with would be answering more macro questions. What would we need to do as a city to make sure students get to school safely?
- It is important to note that MPD has a very specific definition of what safe passage means for MPD. That concept could be evolving since they are part of this Safety Working Group. Roving Leaders also has its own definition of what safe passage means.
 - Part of people's frustration was that everyone had their own unique niche. The systems are disconnected and there is no one big picture. MPD focuses on specific streets and these streets change based on crime rates etc. Roving Leaders approaches it very differently as well.

- Who are the kids accosting kids on their way home from school? Start with data and change policies based on what that data tells you.
- Since the DME is about to hire someone to focus on safety, this person should be asked to come to Task Force with requests for support.
- What is the differentiation between safety and safe passage? There is Safe Passage legislation but we have used it more generally. MPD is charged to do this in a very specific way. School safety is the role of SROs and security guards. Safe passage is to and from school, rec centers, libraries, etc.
 - Anecdotally, what we are hearing from school leaders is: we can handle what's here in the building (we might be working on practices but still handling what's going on in the building). What we can't handle is what happens when students walk out of the school doors.
- Safety is definitely related to at-risk students who are often living in higher crime areas.
 - For example, in Tenleytown, there was an increase in disorderly conduct from Wilson kids, with the assumption being that these are out-of-boundary kids. These assumptions cause tension and data is needed to challenge these types of arguments.
 - MPD also has assumptions about dealing with kids that needed to be peeled back.
- How would this work with the new DME safety person?
 - This person would see the Task Force as a resource and lay out the next year of work and how to leverage each group optimally.
- The safety portion might not kick off by next Task Force meeting. What would the other topic be?
 - Counseling and Resource as the second topic for the group to take on.
- If there are others who work on this issue for their day-job (aside from the ReEngagement center, Office of Student Advocate, etc.), DME could think through and make suggestions for how to structure this group.
- (Deputy Mayor Niles) It is useful to think through what could come out of the working groups as we go into the working groups. What kind of recommendations will make sense for the working groups to create? Take a look at the template to think through the working groups; this is what the other breakout groups just did.